



# NEEDS OF THE STUDENTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION TOWARDS GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT

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## ABSTRACT

The study entitled "Needs of the students of higher education towards gainful employment" was undertaken in Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat. College of Agriculture and College of Home Science were purposively selected for the present study. 30 students from each under graduate and post graduate classes of both the colleges were randomly selected comprising of a total of 120 students. The data were collected through a structured questionnaire prepared by the researcher. The findings of the study revealed that a large percentage (88%) of respondents were from age group of 20-24 years and a sizable percentage (37%) of the respondents were belonged to general caste. 45 per cent of respondents were brought up in semi urban areas. The study indicates that most of the respondents (59%) were from English medium school and majority (70%) were interested in doing job. It is observed from the ranking of findings of the present study that the important needs of the respondents were course content must be matched with the requirement of prospective jobs, adequate content for theory and practical courses, more interactive classroom atmosphere etc. The students' age showed significant relationship with needs of the students.

**KEY WORDS:** Needs, Higher education, Students.

Education is a process of bringing desirable change into the behaviour of human beings. Ultimately education in its real sense is the pursuit of truth. It is an endless journey through knowledge and enlightenment. Higher education is an education beyond the secondary level, especially education at the college or university level. There is a rapidly growing demand for higher education in the world today. With the increase of globalization the growth of higher education is also increasing at a speedy rate. India has the third largest higher education system in the world, next to China and the United States.

Employment in simple words means the act of engaging someone in a job / activity for monetary gain. In today's world unemployment is a big problem for many countries. Year after year, the unemployment has been becoming a burning issue. It has become a great concern for all sectors of the society especially for the economy of the country. It is not easy to decide which are the main causes of unemployment. However, one should give more attention to educational system which is one of the major factors responsible for unemployment. High cost of education, mismatch between the education system and job requirement, and lack of encouragement to students towards entrepreneurship were some of the factors for unemployment. The government has to shoulder the major responsibility for gainful employment of the students acquiring degrees from higher educational institutions.

Looking into the crisis in the job market as well as problems of unemployability by the students after attaining higher degree, arrangement be made to encourage the students to go for entrepreneurship i.e. from job seeker to job provider. The students in higher education are encouraged either to get a job best matched to their qualification or become an entrepreneur or a self employed person. In short, making students employed gainfully befitting to their aptitude.

Hence the curriculum of higher education institutions be improved making provision for employability. The education curriculum should consider the needs of the prevailing industries as well as different upcoming industries / sectors. The course curriculum must be diversified so that the students get the chance to engage in their preferred areas.

It has become very much important to initiate some corrective measures to tackle the situation before going the thing beyond our control.

Keeping this in view the study was conducted with the following objectives:

1. To find out the profile of the students.
2. To elicit the needs of the students for their gainful employment.
3. To find out the relationship of the needs of students with selected independent variables.

## METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Assam Agricultural University of Jorhat. Two colleges of Assam Agricultural University namely College of Agriculture and College of Home Science were purposively selected for the study. The students of 3rd year and 4th year from under graduate classes and the students of 5th year and 6th year from post graduate classes were included as a population in the study. 30 students from each under graduate and post graduate classes of both the colleges

were randomly selected comprising of a total of 120 students. A questionnaire was prepared to collect different information from the students. The collected data were analyzed with suitable statistical tests.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Profile of the students

**Table 1. Distribution of students according to the profile (N=120)**

Sl. No.	Characteristics	Category	Percentage (%)
1	Age	20-24 years	88
		25-29 years	8
		30-34 years	4
2	Caste	General	37
		OBC	29
		MOBC	3
		ST	28
		SC	3
3	Locality	Urban	35
		Sub-urban	45
		Rural	20
4	Medium of schooling	English	59
		Assamese	39
		Hindi	2
5	Choice for gainful employment	No choice	24
		To do a job	70
		To open an enterprise	2
		To be self-employed	4

The data presented in the Table. 1 indicates that a large majority (88%) of the respondents belonged to age group of 20-24 years. One category of the students were under graduate level and another category were post graduate level. The respondents more in number were found between 20-24 years. This was because the students under study were from 3rd year and 4th year classes and PG classes. The finding shows that students join PG classes soon after their completion. Hence, the students were more in this (20-24 years) category.

It is evident from the Table 1 that a sizable percentage (37%) of respondents belonged to general caste. This finding reveals that the respondents of the present investigation were from different castes of which general caste dominate the entire group.

Table 1 reveals that 45 per cent of the respondents were brought up in semi urban setup. It was evident from the above findings that the respondents were more in

number from urban and semi urban areas. Being on Assam Agricultural University it is discouraging to see less students from rural areas joining courses under Agricultural University.

Table 1 reveals that large number (59%) of respondents were from English medium school. This shows tendency of the educated parents to send their children in English medium school to prevent the obstacles of learning in higher education.

It is also clear from the Table 1 that majority (70%) of the respondents were interested in doing job but 24 per cent of the respondents do not have any choice for gainful employment. This finding clearly depicts that students in large numbers were seen to be aimless who did not focus their future.

A negligible percentage of respondents (4% and 2%) were interested for self-employment and opening an enterprise respectively. It is a great concern on the part of the authority that students in large numbers were seeking job in the midst of employment crisis situation not only in the state but through out the country. It is very encouraging to see that a negligible percentage shows their interest for self employment and entrepreneurship where as the university, government and policy maker always encourage students to go for entrepreneurship development and self employment. This is the reason why the syllabus of under graduate and post graduate level have included professional courses to attract students towards entrepreneurship as well as self employment. In one hand authority is included professional courses but they are failed to creating a mindset in the students to go for entrepreneurship and self employment. This finding needed serious concern by the authority.

#### Needs of the students for their gainful employment

Needs of the respondents were analyzed for the present study, which is presented in the following tables.

**Table 2. Ranking of needs of the total students on Classroom facilities**

Statements	Mean score for college of Agriculture	Mean score for college of Home science	Total mean score	Rank
1. Provision for generator for uninterrupted power supply.	1.53	1.65	1.57	I
2. Wi-Fi connection for better teaching- learning.	1.48	1.47	1.48	II
3. LCD connection in each classroom.	1.47	1.37	1.42	III
4. Ready to use OHP connection in each classroom.	1.17	1.50	1.33	IV
5. Comfortable writing desk in each classroom.	1.15	1.47	1.31	V
6. Good quality blackboard in each classroom.	1.13	1.48	1.30	VI
6. Comfortable sitting arrangement in each classroom.	1.20	1.28	1.24	VII
7. Adequate space in each classroom.	0.93	1.35	1.14	VIII
9. Adequate light in each classroom.	0.92	1.23	1.07	IX

The Table 2 clearly reveals that there was a variation in ranking of the statements concerning needs of the respondents pertaining to classroom facilities. Among the statements, the statement like provision of generator for uninterrupted power supply ranked I followed by the statement Wi-Fi connection for better teaching- learning ranked II and LCD connection in each classroom ranked III. The table also highlights that ready to use OHP connection ranked IV followed by comfortable writing desk ranked V and good quality blackboard ranked VI. The statements like more comfortable sitting arrangement, adequate space in each classroom and adequate light in each classroom ranked as VII, VIII and IX respectively. Students' needs in connection with the physical facilities reflect the sense of modernity given by advanced form of technologies in the educational institutions. This shows students of today prefer state of the art facilities in their classrooms which they see in other higher educational institutions of India an abroad. The provision of generator in the classroom was felt by both the colleges hence it comes first in overall ranks. These need of the students need to be taken care by the authority to make their learning experience in higher education institution like AAU highly conducive.

**Table 3. Ranking of needs of the total students on present Syllabus**

Statements	Mean score for college of Agriculture	Mean score for college of Home science	Total mean score	Rank
1. Adequate content for theory and practical courses are required.	0.88	0.90	0.89	I
2. Frequent change of syllabus create more confusion.	0.80	0.75	0.76	II
3. Theory portion of the courses may be reduced.	0.68	0.23	0.46	III
4. The practical portion of the courses may be reduced.	0.32	0.53	0.43	IV
5. Course contents do not match with the requirement of prospective jobs.	0.15	0.33	0.24	V
6. Course contents of the various courses do not have any relevancy with the society.	0.27	0.15	0.21	VI
7. Course content do not match to become self- employed.	0.20	0.17	0.18	VII
8. Course contents do not match with the requirement of entrepreneurship development of the students.	0.07	0.15	0.11	VIII

It is evident from the Table 3 that the statement like adequate content for theory and practical courses ranked I followed by frequent change of syllabus create more confusion ranked II. Statements such as theory portion of the courses may be reduced ranked III, practical portion of the courses may be reduced ranked IV and course contents do not match with the requirement of prospective jobs ranked V. The statements showing the theory and practical portion to be reduced as well as the content of the subject do not matched with the requirement of perspective job are also a matter of serious concern by the authority because if students do not have confident on course content as per requirement of perspective job they tend to lose interest in class. The concern authority must take into consideration these matters thoughtfully. Other statements like course contents of the various courses do not have any relevancy with the society, course content do not match to become self- employed and course contents do not match with the requirement of entrepreneurship development of the students ranked as VI, VII and VIII respectively. The present study clearly showed that students were least interested for self- employment and entrepreneurship. Therefore the statements like course content do not match to become self- employed, course contents do not match with the requirement of entrepreneurship development of the students are showing low rank.

**Table 4. Ranking of needs of the total students on Teaching method**

Statements	Mean score for college of Agriculture	Mean score for college of Home science	Total mean score	Rank
1. Students should be encouraged to present their learning in the classroom by simple presentation.	0.95	0.98	0.97	I
2. Weaker students be given more chance to talk in the class.	0.90	1.00	0.95	II
3. It will be good if teachers use blackboard frequently in the class for quick sustainable interest.	0.95	0.95	0.95	II
4. Teacher should draw feedback from more students in every class.	0.97	0.90	0.93	III
5. There should be more practical demonstration in the classroom.	0.90	0.93	0.92	IV
6. Note given by teachers in class will benefit the students more.	0.88	0.90	0.89	V
7. Teachers should use OHP in the class for clear learning and understanding.	0.85	0.92	0.88	VI
8. Students be encouraged to answer a question in the class facing the other students not sitting in their respective place to develop communication skill as well as confidence.	0.83	0.87	0.85	VII

9. Students will be benefited if teachers distribute handout in the class.	0.80	0.90	0.85	VII
10. More brainstorming be practiced in the classroom.	0.88	0.82	0.85	VII
11. Classes should be done with less lecture and more discussion.	0.75	0.82	0.78	VIII
12. Teacher should give more reading assignment.	0.72	0.80	0.76	IX
13. Students will be benefited more to learn the technical subjects through library assignment.	0.65	0.78	0.72	X

It is observed from the Table 4 that the statement like students should be encouraged to present their learning in the classroom by simple presentation ranked I, weaker students be given more chance to talk in the class and use blackboard frequently were ranked II, teacher should draw feedback from more students in every class ranked III. This findings shows that students preferred more interactive classroom atmosphere by making the classroom communication a two way process. The statements reflecting more practical demonstration, note by teachers in class, use OHP were ranked IV, V and VI respectively. Students of today on an average need readymade notes to grasp the concept of the subject taught clearly for expressing in the examination. Table 4 also shows that the statements like students be encouraged to answer a question in the class to develop communication skill as well as confidence, students will be benefited if teachers distribute handout, more brainstorming be practiced, classes should be done with less lecture and more discussion, teacher should give more reading assignment and more library assignment were ranked as VII, VIII, IX and X respectively. These needs were expected to be in the higher rank where as these needs gets its position in the lower rank which indirectly shows reluctant of the students to go to library and read more.

#### Relationship of the needs of students with selected independent variables

Relationship of needs of the students with selected independent variable are furnished below.

**Table 5. Relationship between needs of the respondents with selected independent variables**

Independent variables	r value	t value
Age	0.182*	2.009

\*Significant at 5% level of significance

It is evident from the Table 5 that there was a positive significant relationship between needs of the respondents with age at 5 per cent level of significance. The finding indicates that more the age of the respondents more were the felt needs. With maturity, students are in a better position to identify the gap between existing facilities with their expectation.

#### CONCLUSION

The investigator concludes from the present research study that the students' needs were coming up very prominently calling attention to the authority. Needs identified demand creating a conducive teaching learning environment. The concern authority must take into consideration these matters meticulously. These important needs of the students if taken seriously by the authority it will be easy to make this university a high level higher education institution. The study showed positive significant relationship between needs of the students with their age which clearly depicts that more matured the students they could visualize and identify their needs very clearly.

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